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(b) A statement of the items involving loss of revenue arising out of the budget estimate for 1928-29 was printed as an appendix to the speech introducing the budget estimates of the year.

(c) The financial policy of the Government comes under examination by the Council during the budget discussions of each year; the estimates for 1929-30 will be placed before the Council on 26th February 1929.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"With reference to clause (b) of the question, I find on a reference to the appendix to the speech introducing the budget estimates of the year, that the total recurring loss of revenue to the Government was 7·79 lakhs. May I know, apart from that, whether the Government have any proposals for lowering the taxation as regards the next year?"

The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"The answer to the question will be found under clause (c)."

Mr S. SATYAMURTI :—"The answer says it is for the Council to decide it. I ask whether, so far as the Government is concerned, which introduces the budget, they have any proposals for lowering the taxation?"

The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"They will be placed before the house in connexion with the estimates for 1929-30."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"May I ask whether in view of getting the opinion of the Council as to the proper distribution of the remitted provincial contributions the Government propose to take the opinion of the Council as regards the lowering of taxation?"

The hon Mr. T. E. MOIR :—"It will obviously be done in connexion with the budget."

Railways

Opening of the railway line between Cuddalore O.T. and Vriddhachalam.

* 870 Q.—Mr. BASHEER AHMAD SAYEED : Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the new railway line between Cuddalore O.T. and Vriddhachalam was originally planned to run between Porto Novo and Vriddhachalam;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for altering the original plans and estimates and at whose suggestion and recommendation it was done;

(c) whether public opinion was consulted by the authorities before the alteration was made and whether any commercial experts recommended the alterations of the said railway line, and what were the advantages gained by such an alteration;

(d) whether the Government have received complaints that the opening of the new railway line between Cuddalore O.T. and Vriddhachalam is likely to seriously affect the commercial prosperity of Porto Novo and minimize its export trade and hamper its growth as a seaport; and

(e) if not, whether the Government will investigate into the manner in, and extent to, which the opening of the new railway line has affected the export and import trade at Porto Novo and lay the report of such investigation on the table of the House?

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A.—As the hon. Member is aware, Railways is a 'Central' subject.

(*a*), (*b*) & (*c*) A survey of a line from Salem to Porto Novo *via* Chinna Salem and Vriddhachalam appears to have been made in 1885-86, but the proposal did not materialize. The question of constructing a line from Vriddhachalam to Cuddalore was raised by the District Board of South Arcot in 1904 in connexion with a proposal made by Messrs Parry & Co. to construct a light railway between the two places. Whether Porto Novo would offer the same advantages as a terminus as Cuddalore was considered by the District Board and it finally selected Cuddalore. The Cuddalore Landing and Shipping Fees Committee, the Port Officer, Cuddalore, and the South Indian Railway authorities also favoured Cuddalore—the main reasons being that Cuddalore Port offers greater facilities for trade and that the Cuddalore-Vriddhachalam line is preferable from an engineering point of view.

(*d*) The Government are aware that a good deal of the ground-nut crop of Vriddhachalam will probably be sent by rail to Cuddalore instead of, as in the past, by road to Porto Novo.

(*e*) Does not arise.

Betting

Licence fees for bucket shops in the Madras City.

*871 *Q.*—Mr. C. S. GOVINDARAJA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) the licence fees, if any, collected by the Commissioner of Police, Madras City, permitting the running of bucket shops; and

(*b*) whether Government propose to introduce in the Council the Bill for the suppression of bucket shops alias sports clubs at its next sittings, and, if not, the reasons for the delay?

A.—(*a*) No such licence fee is collected by the Commissioner of Police.

(*b*) The Bill had to be referred to various officers of Government. Their replies have been received and examined by Government. It has been re-drafted and is under scrutiny. After the Government of India's sanction is obtained, it will be introduced in the Council.

Mr. C. S. GOVINDARAJA MUDALIYAR :—"May I know if any kind of fee or tax is collected?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"No, Sir."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—"Will the Government be pleased to expedite the introduction of the Bill?"

The hon Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I shall do so, Sir."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—"May I know in what stage the Bill is—whether it is re-drafted, whether any scrutiny has taken place or whether it has been sent to the Government of India for sanction?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"The Bill is now being examined by the administrative department."